



Chapter 10 Environment

Cluster 9 Asset Profile

The Instrumented Group Interview (IGI) surveys sought to identify the environmental concerns of area stakeholders in attendance. Stakeholders seemed mainly concerned about issues that impacted upon the aesthetics of the area; overgrown vacant lots, illegal dumping, trash and garbage, and abandoned cars topped the list of concerns. Illegal dumping poses the most serious threat of these concerns, with possible health risks to neighboring residents, depending upon the type of materials being dumped. Following are the issues mentioned above as well as others identified at the focus group and from the IGI's.

Issues

Overgrown vacant land

Unmaintained vacant land in blighted condition was a major problem identified as an environmental issue. Below these vacant lots, soil contamination from buried building debris is likely, given the fact that many structures were improperly demolished. In many cases, homes were demolished and buried in the existing basement. This leads to many problems including contaminated soil from lead paint and pipes, termites breeding in the wood debris, and buried oil tanks.

Illegal Dumping

The problems associated with illegal dumping range from visual blight caused by dumped debris, to health risks to nearby residents if the dumped material contains pollutants which can contaminate ground water and affect air quality. The north end of Butzel playfield was cited as a common location for illegal dumping.

Trash and Garbage

Refuse in alleys, along commercial strips, in vacant lots, and other areas, was identified as problem by stakeholders. While this issue has primarily visual affects, litter-strewn environs impact upon perceptions of the area, which may lead to disinvestment by area residents and businesses, and can prevent reinvestment by developers.

Abandoned Cars

As with most of the issues identified as environmental problems, abandoned cars primarily impact upon the visual environment within the Cluster.

Vacant, deteriorating structures

Within Cluster 9 this problem affects commercial areas especially. Aside from the visual environmental impact of these buildings, many of these structures have asbestos containing pipe wrap and other building materials, lead paint and pipes, and other environmental problems associated with the buildings past use.

Vacant houses pose less of an environmental threat than commercial buildings. If the home is still standing it can be easily be demolished, and potentially harmful building materials, lead pipes, etc., can be disposed of properly before these harmful materials seep into the soil. The psychological effect and hazard to children, however, is greatest where vacant buildings are utilized by vagrants or as crack houses. The disinvestment cycle often begins with a single vacant house on a block.

Junkyards/Scrapyards

Junkyards and scrapyards were listed as an issue by few stakeholders within Cluster 9.

Lead Paint

Within existing structures, lead paint poses the greatest risk to young children. Window sills and other toddler-height chewable painted surfaces are dangerous. Removals of the old paint or encapsulation are acceptable means of preventing young children from ingesting lead-containing paint. Lead contamination was not listed as a concern of any IGI respondent.

ACT 307 Contaminated Sites

There are no ACT 307 contaminated sites within Cluster 9.

CERCLA Super Fund Sites

Within cluster 9 there is one CERCLA Super Fund site, indicated on Map A23. This site is listed in the Detroit Planning and Development Department CERCLA SITES 1997 as:

Puritan Street Asbestos
16230 Puritan

Programs

Neighborhood City Hall Battery Recycling – Old batteries can be dropped off at any neighborhood City Hall for proper disposal.

DPW Bagged Yard Waste Pick-up - The City of Detroit Department of Public Works collects bagged and bundled yard waste the same day as "bulk collection day", which occurs once a month.

City of Detroit Recycling Hotline - The City of Detroit has a recycling hotline that lists all current activities.